

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

VOL. XXII.

JANUARY, 1914.

No. 8

THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

MONTHLY, EXCEPT AUGUST: 50 cents a year.
Single copy, 5 cents.

Entered at the Boston, Mass., post-office as second class
mail matter, Nov. 14, 1892.

CONTENTS FOR NO. 8.

THE NEW YEAR	85
QUIETNESS AND ASSURANCE	85
THE SHORTNESS OF LIFE	86
THE STILL HOUR	89
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB	89
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL:—	
TEACHING CHILDREN TO HELP THEIR CITY . . .	90
NATURAL HISTORY:—	
HOW TO MAKE A TERASHERY	91
JOAN OF ARC	92
A LION	94
THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN	95
THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE	96
IMPORTANT NOTICES	96

THE NEW YEAR.

A flower unknown; a book unread;
A tree with fruit unharvested;
A path untrod; a house whose rooms
Lack yet the heart's divine perfumes;
A landscape whose wide border lies
In silent shade 'neath silent skies;
A wondrous fountain yet unsealed;
A casket with its gifts concealed;
This is the year that for you waits
Beyond to-morrow's mystic gates.

Oh, may this flower unfold to you
Visions of beauty sweet and new;
This book on golden pages trace
Your sacred joys and deeds of grace!
May all the fruits of this strange tree
Luscious and rosy-tinted be;
This path through fields of knowledge go;
This house with love's content o'erflow;
This landscape glitter with the dew
Of blessed hopes and friendships true;
This fountain's living crystal cheer,
As fail the springs that once were dear;
This casket with such gems be stored
As shine in lives that love the Lord!

—*The Christian Life.*

QUIETNESS AND ASSURANCE.

God works in silence, and his vast designs
Are brought to pass in quietness and peace:
Unheralded, the sun comes forth at morn
And without tumult on the nation shines;
Unwept his ministrations cease,
And twilight worlds are born.

The years sweep onward, but their chariot
wheels
Vouchsafe no echo to our yearning call;
The swift attendant seasons, as they pass,
Are shod with silence; and no sound reveals
The rapid hours, whose steps are as the fall
Of snowflakes on the grass.

In quietness, through dreary, wintry days,
The buds of next year's summer take their
rest,
Assured of happy waking by and by;
Though long the sweetness of the spring de-
lays,
Though tempests move in wrath from east to
west,
They neither strive nor cry.

Patient in long reserve of hidden power,
God's judgments tarry their appointed time;
But from his love, wherein all fulness dwells,
Mute tokens come about us hour by hour,
In silence sweeter than the voiceless chime
Of fragrant lily bells.

The perfect bliss for which his people crave—
The final victory—he sees across
The cloud and sunshine of a thousand years;
While the frail garland on a baby's grave
May circumscribe life's utmost gain or loss
To eyes grown dim with tears.

O troubled heart, no storms of adverse fate,
No wave of circumstance, may overleap
The jasper borders of eternity.
Acquaint thyself with him; and, soon or late,
He shall appoint a resting-place for sleep
Wherein no dreams shall be.

He giveth quietness and peace serene,
Here and hereafter, unto those who rest,
Soul-centred, on his own eternal calm;
While sweet assurance, entering realms un-
seen,
Leads onward to the triumph of the blest,—
The white robe and the palm!

—*Leisure Hours.*

THE SHORTNESS OF LIFE.

"Brethren, the time is short."—I COR. vii. 29.

There is, of course, only one subject for a sermon on this text, yet there is another than the interpretation most often made of the words, "Brethren, the time is short." Too commonly preachers say that, considering how the time is short, it ought to be used in thinking of another time. "The time is short," cries the evangelist. "Soon you will face eternity: therefore, contemplate it now!" "The time is short," shouts the exhorter, "and the judgment near. Turn before it is too late." "The time is short," moans the morbid seer. "Fix your heart on another life ere this life ends." "The time is short," says the sentimentalist, and turns his eyes to heaven.

There is, indeed, good reason for making this the theme of exhortation, and good reason for sober thought about it. Nothing is truer, nothing is surer, than that, at the best, our time is short. Life hurries us the more, the more length it shows; and, when it nears the end, and the hurry is over, then, like men in solemn haste, "the aged look along the narrow road and see the wide river near." Wherever we are, nothing is more helpful than a right thought about the shortness of life, and few things more idle than an empty and perfunctory thought about it. What is the helpful thought, and what the useless thought? How shall you distinguish between saying, "Brethren, the time is short," in the way you recognize as unpractical and visionary, and saying it in the way such a vigorous and practical man as Paul must have said it? The best way to judge between the weak and the strong use of these words is to see which is likely to weaken the life that now is and which is likely to strengthen it. I do not forget that there is great truth in the idea that this life is preparation for something more. There is every sign that it is such preparation. There are very few parts of it, though ever so insignificant, but have a possibility, a purpose and end, that this life will not contain. However complete a man's life, however long it may be, something is always left undone, something prophesies opportunity, and no one can easily be spared. Our whole life seems not a thing in itself, but part of a larger thing. In very truth, it is a preparation for something, we know not what, beyond.

But, taking all the truth there is in this view of life, it need not take one's attention away from the things of every day or make us think less of the life that now is. The first and main effect of thinking our life a

preparation for another would properly be to make us attend more closely to the preparation and not dream about what will come afterward. After all is said, our present main concern is this life; and the more, if, for the next, the mistake I am speaking of is not that men should think this life a preparation for another, but that they should stop making it so. The most effective way of saying "The time is short" is not so as to make people think less, but more of it. If thinking that the time is short makes you sad or discouraged or listless, or makes you ambitious for something outside your reach and neglectful of things within your reach; if thinking that the time is short makes people long for glories beyond and careless about glories present, makes them undervalue this life in their praises of the next,—then be sure that you and they have reversed the saying and its idea: you have made it reflect things so that their relations are changed about instead of showing those relations as they are. Be sure you have looked *at* it instead of *through* it, have tried to see what it is not given us to see, and have overlooked, meanwhile, the things plainly before us. If you had dreamed for years of seeing another land, and dreamed in vain; had longed to follow the great marks of history in older continents than ours, and to trace the footprints of humanity where you have never seen them; had dwelt in fancy on the treasures of beauty you might there behold, and in imagination had walked where Cæsar walked when the world was his, or looked at Buonarotti's dome, or gazed entranced on Raphael's canvas; if castles old in story and great cathedrals which make music to the sight from the sacrifices and adorations of centuries,—if these dim and far-off hopes had been yours, and then, some night, there should come a message to prepare, and you knew that the next day you could sail across the enchanted sea and enter the gates of the wonderful past; if you had cherished some such dream as this,—cherished even while it seemed impossible,—and then suddenly it should become a possible fact of your life, how would you be likely to say, "The time is short"? Would you spend it in regrets that it was not longer? Would it make you sad or listless? Would you say, "The time is short," and use it up in saying so? Everybody knows enough of such preparation to know that, the shorter the time, the more eager and happy and full it is made. Just because the time must be short, you would do more and do it better. Just because the time is short, you would be more joyous, and, however short

it might be, you would be ready. Just because the time before such precious anticipation is short, you would make the most of it. "The time is short," you would say; and the time would shine and be miraculous with achievement.

I speak as one who believes that a new country always awaits us; that every day may give realizations better and richer than anticipations; that we know not what charm invites us, what surprises await us; that the future may always be brighter and more alluring than fancy; that vessels sail from every one's port across seas where every wave is charmed; and that there come continually messages to make ready, saying, "The time is short." It is the cheerful, gladdening, inspiriting, athletic force of these words which I wish to bring out. This is the deeper truth of saying that the time is short; that, therefore, we should think better of it, not less; that we should prize it and not neglect it, deem it an opportunity and not a threat.

Nor is this a view that depends merely on temperament or opinion. There are a good many facts to bear it out. The great encouragement of such a view of life is that so many very great things can be done in a little time. The deeds that have changed the face of the world shine out of very brief periods. The year 1492 was but one year out of millions, and yet the new world then discovered has not yielded half the richness of that discovery. The Declaration of Independence was adopted in a day, no longer than this, in a time thought by some men unwisely short, yet for centuries this nation will be building on the foundation then established. Lincoln was President less than two terms, and his career was cut short in the prime of his life, yet in that time the slaves were emancipated, whom centuries, counting other histories with ours, had not sufficed to free; and the Union was preserved under the guidance of that great man of the people. The men who did such things were men who realized that the time was short, but who knew that it was enough. They did in a minute what people who lament the shortness of time make long years fail to do. While others neglected opportunities and counted the time too short for great accomplishment, such men proved that the greatest things may be done in the shortest time; and for such men no time is so short but it may place eternity in bond to it. I cannot help reminding you of the greatest example of this in the world, chiefly because it has been so often noticed that its significance has become dulled. I bid you think what has

followed from the life of Jesus, itself the outstanding miracle greater than any history accords to him. One short life in a little country town of a province as remote from the thought of the world as a Western territory is from you,—a life which ended when most lives have scarcely begun their usefulness, a life which, at the most, was short, of which only one year, surely not more than three years, was known to the world! Think what one year is with us,—how quickly it passes, how little it leaves! It passed as quickly then; but how much it has left! A year, and at the end a life cut short! But a year of God and a life that will for its very shortness abide to the ending of this world! I doubt if we can rightly say of any life which has borne well its part that it has been cut short. Death always comes prematurely, and not more so—essentially—to the young than to the old. But we cannot call it premature if the time has sufficed for one sweet influence, one good deed, one noble work begun on earth where nothing can be ended. The worth of life is always in the quality of things begun, not in the number of things ended; and, if this is true, we ought to be careful how we call death premature. In the truer perspective of distance many a life which seemed to come to an untimely end is seen to be most symmetrical in having had such an end. "Nothing in his life became him so much as his manner of leaving it," might be said also as to many a man's time of leaving it. "There are brave and fortunate deaths," said Montaigne; and he added: "I have seen death cut the thread of the progress of a prodigious advancement, and in the height and flower of its increase, of a certain person with so glorious an end that, in my opinion, his ambitions and generous designs had nothing in them so high and great as their interruption. He arrived, without completing his course, at the place to which his ambition aimed, with greater glory than he could either have hoped or desired, anticipating by his fall the name and power to which he aspired in perfecting his career."

The time was, indeed, too short for us with respect to many who have left us, but not too short for them. No baby was ever carried so soon away but its life left some glory in the earth, something imperishable in the arms that bore it. No life was lived in vain that left some good example, some tender memory, some undying love. No such flower faded so soon but some beauty was added to the sum of human good that was not there before. However short the time, if it has had a worth in it, length of

years could not have made up for the lack of that worth; and, however long the time, if virtue is in it, the ending thereof will be too soon. In fact, we might say even more than that much may be done in the short times that so easily go to waste. We might say not only that a short time may produce great things, but that the best things in the world require to be done in a short time. Begin with material achievements and go up to moral, intellectual, spiritual achievements, and you see that the necessity for time diminishes as you ascend. A short time would not have sufficed for the Pyramids, but it did not take Moses long to decide to leave Egypt. To choose between two paths is the work of an instant, though each may be a day's journey. Christianity has centuries behind and centuries before in its work for the world; but all that Jesus said which has come down to us you could read in an hour. The greatest powers in the world are like the light which travelled two hundred thousand miles a second this morning to reach us: it is not so much a question how much time as what kind of time in regard to the best things in the world. It takes time to work them out, but it is necessary that the time be short in which the work is decided. The railroad switch must be quickly worked, in order to make the difference it makes in the destination and safety of those who are turned one way or the other. A very short time every day given to bodily exercise will make one stronger than a much longer total time given occasionally and irregularly. It is wonderful, the potency of a little time if it be only used. The more closely you confine it in the right way, the more powerful it becomes. A resolution taken every morning will transform a character. A little reading regularly pursued will make a man an authority in the subject with which it is concerned. It is how a man uses the moments that tells the results of the years. It is so with bodily culture, with mental power, with intellectual training and acquisition; and it is so in religion. The pious people of his day were frightened when Jesus told them that the length of their prayers had very little to do with the blessings of religion. The prayer he commended to the Pharisees uses only seven words of our language, six in Greek; and the prayer he taught his disciples was not much longer than the publican's prayer. That is not to say that all praying should be as brief, but in personal religion the best praying is likely to be brief. An instant is enough to light up the soul forever. Many a hard task is charged with cheerfulness by the

mood with which it is undertaken. Many a lifelong sorrow is consecrated by one moment's remembered influence. A vast space of darkness may be vanquished by one little beam of faith, and one moment's silent communion may enclose you within a sanctuary whose quiet the noisy world can never invade.

For ourselves we seek those forces that take little time, but multiply into all times. Toward others also we may prove the same law. It never takes long to be courteous. Enmity is a long struggle, but kindness goes straight to its end. A look will express a sympathy, when endless explanation cannot atone for a neglect. Contention will perpetuate a quarrel that one word of love would end. Forgiveness, kindness, charity, forbearance, tenderness,—these are the instantaneous, the final potencies. Hatred, envy, malice, suspicion, and hardness,—these put heaven far away and lengthen the path thereto with endless windings. No time is so short but it will suffice if you take God's hand in it. None will be long enough without it.

Brethren, the time is short, however we hope it may be long, but not too short, however short it prove. Who knows how soon it may end? Who need care, if meantime less and less goes to waste, if each moment meets its appropriate end, if each is blessed with love and good works? The man who refrains from setting out a tree, because his time is likely to be shorter than the life of the tree, such a man is sure never to see its beauty; but the man who plants his tree that another, if not himself, may rest in its shade, he, if his days be lengthened, shall enjoy the fruits of his deed, and the very planting will be a satisfaction if that day be the last. Whether our days shall be long or not, whether having been long they shall be longer, is not ours to know, cannot be for our good to know or affect. But it is ours to make them, if not long, rich; if not ample, pure; if not abundant, still helpful and wholesome and blessed. It is ours every day to plant the trees of the Lord,—no time is ever too short for that; and it is his to bring them to foliage and wide-spread good,—his with whom a thousand years are as a day, from whom a day of trust and obedience will be to us as a thousand years of peace.—*John W. Day.*

We live between two worlds,—the world of things seen and temporal and the world of things unseen and eternal. We walk by sight, and we walk by faith: every one, every day, lives by both of these faculties.

THE STILL HOUR.

SHORT PRAYERS.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

O Thou, who art the God of hope, fill us with all joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope, through the power of thy Holy Spirit.

May those that are strong bear the infirmities of the weak.

Save us, we beseech thee, O Heavenly Father, from being conformed to this world, from thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, from being wise in our own conceits, from being overcome of evil, and enable us to overcome evil with good.

In this world all our activity and all our joy come from three sources,—Thought, Love, Work. First there is intelligence, exercise of intellect, creating our knowledge, giving the power of thinking accurately and justly; there is that inspiration which all men share more or less, by which a stream of new ideas flows into the mind from some upper source. This is one fountain of human joy. A second source of contentment is work. To be able to exercise our powers, to accomplish something, to bring order out of confusion, to add something to the wealth of the world,—this is another great source of satisfaction. And, thirdly, there is love. To be able to go out of ourselves, to sympathize with others, to enter into their needs and perplexities, to help them forward, to enjoy and reverence great qualities of mind and heart, to feel at home in the society and friendship of other minds,—this is another of the essentials of happiness. But, when we have them all united, we have a sort of heaven, even in this life. That is why Paul spoke of sitting in heavenly places with Jesus Christ now.

—Go Up Higher.

So I am watching quietly

Every day.

Whenever the sun shines brightly,

I rise and say,—

"Surely it is the shining of His face!"

And look into the gates of His high place

Beyond the sea,

For I know He is coming shortly

To summon me.

And, when a shadow falls across the window
Of my room,
Where I am working at my appointed task,
I lift my head to watch the door, and ask

If He is come;

And the Angel answers sweetly,

In my home,—

"Only a few more shadows,

And He will come."

—"Coming," by B. M.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

OFFERS.

The Cambridge Cheerful Letter Committee offers the following. Apply to Miss Helen Bayley, 319 Broadway, Cambridge, Mass.: "Sights and Insights," Whitney; "The Rules of the Game," White; "A Master of Men," Oppenheim; "The Good Comrade," Silberrad; "Thompson's Progress," Hune; "Northanger Abbey," Austen; "The One Good Guest," Walford; "Darrel of the Blessed Isles," Bachelier; "Hyperion," Longfellow; "Childe Harold," Byron; "Songs of Love and Childhood"; "Lyrics of Joy," Sherman; "Every-day Religion," James Freeman Clarke; "Elementary History of Art"; "Fun for the Household" (Games).

REQUESTS.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. I wish my address changed from Moody, Oklahoma, to Peggs, Oklahoma. I am very thankful for the reading sent me, and have passed most of it to others. I would like the *Ladies' Home Journal* or any good reading, and also some picture books for the children. Will some one please send me the November number of the *Cheerful Letter*? M. Triplett, Peggs, Oklahoma.

2. Will you please send me a book or two to read? I would be so glad to get "At the Mercy of Tiberius," "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine," or "Struggle for a Ring." Mrs. John Henderson, Sandidges, Virginia, R. F. D. 2.

3. Miss T. A. Sale, Ronda, North Carolina, asks for *Modern Priscilla* for 1912 and 1913.

4. Miss Mattie E. Sale, Roaring River, North Carolina, asks for "Every-day Problems in Teaching," by O'Shea; "Growing Life," Evans; "Country Life and the Country School," Carney.

5. Mrs. A. E. Hicks, Monroe, Virginia, R. F. D. 1, will appreciate reading for herself and husband.

6. Will you please send me some books, magazines, or reading of any kind, as I am not able to work to make money? I am going to school. I have only one hand. My right hand was caught in a machine and had to be taken off when I was about six years old. I am in the eighth grade. I have a sister here in school with me. She is eighteen, and I am twenty, and we both enjoy reading any good magazines. I like reading better than anything else. Miss Buna Miller, Richfield, North Carolina, Route 2, Box 63.

7. I am a resting teacher. A friend has sent me the *Cheerful Letter*, and I write to ask if any one can send me Maria Montessori's book, "The Montessori Method." I will return it or pass it on to others, as desired. Address, Susan Plessner-Pollock, 14 Brunnen Street, Gotha, Germany.

8. Miss Carrie J. Beaman, 164 Phenix Avenue, Knightsville, Rhode Island, a shut-in, asks for "The Minister's Wooing," and cancelled blue Columbian stamps.

9. Miss Elma Horton, Elkville, North Carolina, will appreciate any books, magazines, or sermons. She especially wants a Dictionary.

10. Mrs. K. L. Bridge, Dade City, Florida, asks for the following books: "The Professor," Charlotte Brontë; "Emma," Jane Austen; "The Last of the Mohicans," J. F. Cooper; "Cousin Phillis," Mrs. Gaskell; Grimm's "Fairy Tales"; "Kidnapped," Stevenson; "Charles Auchester," E. S. Sheppard; "Sesame and Lilies," Ruskin; "Peg Woffington," Charles Reade; "Last of the Barons," Lytton; "Water Babies," Kingsley; "Early Romances," William Morris; and especially, "Abraham Lincoln's Speeches and Letters." (All of these books are published in the Everyman's Library.)

11. The *Woman's Home Companion* for 1914 is asked for by the following: Mrs. Jessie Rossmüller, New York Mills, Route 3, Minnesota; Mrs. W. C. Burton, Mt. Park, R. F. D. 2, Box 64, Oklahoma; Miss Estelle Sutterfield, High Point, North Carolina; Mrs. Alice Whittle, Blackville, South Carolina; Mrs. Cora A. Hoskinson, Three Rivers, Michigan; Mrs. Sarah Benedict, Greene, North Carolina; Mrs. Nellie Sezer, Rhoadesville, Orange County, Virginia; and Miss Mattie Frizzell, Frankston, Texas.

12. The *Youth's Companion* for 1914 is asked for by the following: Mrs. Alice Whittle, Blackville, South Carolina; Miss Mattie Frizzell, Frankston, Texas; and Miss M. B. Landis, Oxford, North Carolina.

A note of thanks received by Miss Haven of the Medford Branch:—

"You can never know what your kindness means to the dear baby. She has no playmates, and your kindness is a perfect godsend to her.

"She watches so for the *Christian Register*, and, as soon as she sees it, everything else is forgotten in her eagerness to see what 'My Hannah Haven' has sent me. The other day I heard her scream. I rushed in. She had opened the papers all alone, and had found that dear little cape. She just clasped her little hands, and looked at it. Then she said, 'Mamma, my Hannah Haven must love me orlie.'

"She coaxes me to tell her about you,—how you look, and where you live, and all about it; and we have made a delightful fairy godmother of you."

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

TEACHING CHILDREN TO HELP THEIR CITY.

The scattered movement to bring the public schools into more intimate contact with the communities which support them and which they are expected to serve is interestingly reflected in a bulletin sent out by the Bureau of Municipal Research, which puts to tax-payers, teachers, and members of the school boards throughout the country two suggestive questions:—

"What do your pupils know about their city? Are school children helping their city?"

It is the suggestion of this bulletin that the public schools should teach practical civics, and that without co-operation from the schools themselves volunteer leagues find it difficult to accomplish much in field civics.

"Few facts are now available about practical instruction in civics and in what government actually does every day, how it works and with what results," the bureau reports.

"Newark teaches Newark by a series of leaflets covering municipal topics like fire, police and health departments, city beautifying, street cleaning, public schools, etc. A course of study on Newark, its geography, history, and industry, is prepared for teachers.

"Chicago has taught Chicago since 1909, when Superintendent Ella Flagg Young substituted this new study for eighth grade algebra, to 'make good citizens alive to the needs of their communities.'

"Waterbury, Connecticut, schools teach Waterbury. St. Joseph, Missouri, schools teach St. Joseph. Similar courses are given in Washington, Indiana; Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Newport, Rhode Island. Parkersburg, West Virginia, teaches Parkersburg in English as well as civic courses. Winston-Salem, South Carolina, has a boys' branch of the Board of Trade to interest high-school students in community problems.

"Social settlements, libraries, Boy Scouts, and other outside-the-school organizations in many cities have classes and clubs which reach only a small per cent. of the boys and girls they would reach if instruction were made available through the public schools.

"Juvenile street cleaning leagues were started in 1896 in New York's elementary schools by R. Simons under the department of street cleaning, and are now active in over forty schools.

"Are school children helping your city? Through the gift of a New York woman interested in children, three members of the Training School for Public Service, conducted by the New York bureau of municipal research, were made available to the street cleaning department last summer. They organized juvenile street cleaning leagues in vacation playgrounds to clean up streets and yards near infant milk stations, found to be littered, dirty, and disease-breeding; to show children how to help their city and to interest them in the work of departments; to experiment with co-operation between health and street cleaning departments and public schools.

"These leagues accomplished much. Nearly 4,000 children were enrolled from thirty-three vacation schools and playgrounds during August, and held on an average of two meetings a week. Of the Young Pioneers (girls) and Young Volunteers (boys), over 10 years of age, 1,192 handed in reports on the sanitary condition of their 'beats' near twenty-four infant milk stations. They noted particularly uncovered garbage cans, uncovered cut fruit, refuse thrown from windows, litter on sidewalks, and blocked fire-escapes. Blank report forms were furnished, giving the location of nuisances so that attention by health or street officers might be facilitated.

"When principals of vacation schools showed interest, the Young Pioneers secured their best results. The leaders of these experimental summer leagues have agreed that to make field civics really serviceable to children and communities it must be closely connected with public schools."—*The New York Times*.

NATURAL HISTORY.

HOW TO MAKE A THRASHERY.

If winter is late in coming, the leaves hang persistently on the oaks and beeches, and the frost has not made the vines too brittle, there is something that you can do in early December that may lure a wonderful musician to your bit of ground next May.

Time was when the wood thrush, catbird, rosebreast, and brown thrasher were classed with the shy and elusive birds that seldom left dense thickets or wood edges. It is years since the wood thrushes became regular garden lodgers, and rival catbirds sang their mocking bravuras from opposite clothespoles, building nests in the syringas that border the path. Still the thrasher held aloof. On his first arrival, a single bird, or at most a pair, would scratch about among the leaves that collect around the shrubberies, then would follow a brief period of wonderful song from the very top of a half-dead ash-tree, not too close to the house; but no more would be seen of the birds until the next spring.

One year some old pea-brush was left in a heap between garden and field, quick-growing vines seized upon it, and it was meshed into something like a wild tangle. At any rate, the thrashers thought it genuine and built a nest there, placing it about two feet above the ground. As the male is usually careful to choose a perch from which to sing at a wise distance from the nest, so the parent birds took great pains to go around "Robin Hood's Barn" in their trips to and from their pea-brush home. "If here, why not in the garden itself?" I thought, and then I made a tour of the possibilities within sight of the house itself.

It was late autumn, the time when, the garden being put in order, there is a little breathing-space for cutting old wood from the shrubberies, and shortening long shoots that are sure to be weighed down and broken by snow and wind. One rather shabby-looking group of shrubs had been selected for special attack, a straggling flock of the prune-leaved spirea, with double white flowers like tiny roses (Bridal Wreath was, I think, the name given it in the old garden from which mine came). This spirea, by means of tap-roots, walks along, and, if the soil be good, sticks out its elbows and quickly appropriates the surrounding country. Every third year this particular tangle had to be thinned out, and this was its third year. Before ordering wholesale slaughter, I drew near, to see what other plant wanderers had

joined the gypsy band, and helped make an almost impenetrable thicket between the flower-corner and the house itself.

Amid the sharp, straight shoots of spirea were raspberry canes, lilac suckers, several wands of sweet-briar, young tartarian honeysuckle, cornels, and black cherries,—all telling that the thicket was a favorite perch for birds. Around this, stretched like arms, long vines of wistaria were clasped, and, when I tried to pull them away, a sharp barberry thorn plucked me by the sleeve.

As I stopped to free myself, something whispered in my ear: "Here is what you are looking for, a perfect thrashery, all ready made and waiting. All you have to do is to protect this place near the ground from cats, for they will not be able to force themselves through higher up."

Instead of cutting and pruning, I called the man-of-all-garden work to help me build, and some lengths of fence netting with a barbed wire top and bottom were pushed between the bushes close to the ground, and wired together, until a space of some twenty feet was enclosed. The meshes of the wire were sufficiently wide to admit a large bird, but nothing more.

The first season nothing happened, perhaps because there was still a large white cat about the garden, who hunted only by moonlight or before dawn, and was therefore a difficult mark. Early this spring, however, she fell victim to an irate chicken-raiser, and by the last of May I was aware that my thrashery was being prepared for summer residents, even though the singer of the family had moved from the ash to the tip-top of a cedar in an adjoining field.

I respected the thrasher's desire for seclusion, and did not meddle; but what was my surprise, one morning about the 4th of July, to see, hopping about on the lawn close under the shelf of bird food, five thrashers, three unmistakably young birds, all showing no more fear than so many robins. In a very few days they came to the shelf itself, and from the variety they chose softened dog biscuits, berries (we always put on the bird-shelf the berries rejected when picking them over for the table), and bits of cake.

This feeding was kept up all through the August molt, during which one of the old birds, entirely bereft of its tail, would come daily, and, when satisfied, flop back into the bushes as if ashamed. In the middle of September they disappeared for a time, but returned for a week, not leaving for good until the first frost that came with the full of the October moon.

So tame they became that one morning

a blue jay, starling, robin, catbird, song sparrow, and two thrashers were feeding side by side on the shelf within a few feet of the dining-room window. Ah, yes, we feed the jays, and by keeping them well fed their thieving temperament is held in check. As a proof of this, before we fed them they were set upon by other birds, now they are accepted on an equal footing.

This autumn, when you are tempted to be very neat and to drive away your plant gypsies by pruning, stay your hand, and bind them into cat-proof thrashereries instead; for in there you may also entertain, quite unawares, a pair of Maryland yellow-throats, or that tantalizing ventriloquist, the yellow-breasted chat.—*Mabel Osgood Wright, in Bird-Lore.*

JOAN OF ARC.

(Continued from the last number.)

Then the Judge, wishing to find some basis for the charge of "relapse," asked her if she had heard her Voices again since Thursday, the day of abjuration. Without attempting to escape the snare, she promptly answered, "Yes."—"And what did they say to you?" She answered,—and here, on the margin of the original manuscript are written the words *Responsio mortifera* ("The answer which caused her death"),—"God has taught me, by Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret, that I have committed a sad treachery in abjuring to save my life; that I damned myself to save my life." She added that her Voices had told her what to do that day, to answer the preacher boldly from the scaffold, for he was a false preacher. She said: "If I should admit that God did not send me, I should damn myself. It is true that God sent me. My Voices have told me that I did very wrong in confessing that what I have done was not well done."

The clerk who wrote down her answers adds that she said that she put on the man's dress to protect her modesty. The judges then decided that she should be delivered over to the secular arm to die.

When this cruel death was announced to her, her woman's nature gave way. She began to weep bitterly and tear her hair. "Alas! shall my body be burned, which I have preserved pure and uncorrupt? I had rather be beheaded, seven times over, than be burned."

"O Rouen, Rouen, must I die here?" said she on her way to execution. It was nine in the morning, May 30, 1431, that she set

out for the scaffold after having taken the communion, by permission of the Bishop. Remorse, pity, grief, were taking possession of men's minds, more and more, on one side, a corresponding rage increasing on the other. Those who showed the least sympathy for her fate were in imminent peril from the English; nevertheless, they continued to show it.

Let us mention the names of three friends who stayed with her to the last,—Brother L'Advenu, Brother Isambert, and one of the secretaries, Massieu. All three had been threatened by the English for having given her their advice, and manifested pity for her during the trial. As she passed on, her sweet face yet wet with a woman's tears, the people along the streets wept likewise. The priest who had falsely pretended to be her friend in the prison in order to betray her confidence, repenting, burst through the guards, flung himself down before her, accusing himself aloud of his treachery, and imploring her pardon and God's. If Warwick had not interfered, he would have been instantly killed.

They preached a sermon as the introduction of this fearful ceremony. At its close, she wept and besought forgiveness of all, forgiving their wrongs against herself and begging them to pray for her. Even the hard-hearted Bishop, even the cruel English, were touched and could not refrain from tears; but not the less did the Bishop proceed to pronounce the sentence: "We cut you off from the Church as a relapsed penitent, as a rotten member; we give you over to the secular power, entreating it to moderate its sentence and spare you the pain of death and mutilation of limb." This conventional hypocrisy was uttered in full view of the stake where she was to be immediately burned. Kissing the cross which an English soldier had given her, she ascended the wooden pile raised on a foundation of plaster, and, looking on the city and silent multitude beneath her, cried again: "O Rouen, Rouen! I fear me much thou wilt have to suffer for my death." The executioner applied the fire. She saw it and shrieked. The priest who stood by her did not pay attention to the flames. Then, forgetting herself, she begged him to go down.

While the flames began to roll up around her, she first cried out for water, then she cried on God, and finally said, "My Voices have not deceived me." In the midst of the flames she saw that the safety and deliverance they had promised were not deliverance from death, but that of her soul. God no doubt then, as in a thousand instances, gave her, at

the moment of death, an inward light and strength which "quenched the violence of the fire." Her last words were, "Jesus!—Jesus!"

All this is testified by the priest who had just descended from the pile. "She finished her prayer in heaven," says Wallon. Even the soldiers were melted. These rude men-at-arms cried: "We are lost! We have burned a saint! Would God my soul were where hers is now!" Some tried to laugh. One man had sworn he would throw a *fagot* on the pile. As he approached, her voice, crying on Jesus, reached his ear. He was taken ill, almost fainted, and was carried to a neighboring tavern. "I saw a dove escape from her mouth," said he. The executioner went in utter dismay to Brother Isambert to confess. He could not believe that God would forgive him.

In 1450 measures were taken for revising this Process. In 1456 a Court of Revision appointed by Pope Calixtus III. pronounced the charges against Jeanne to be utterly false.

And now, in considering her life, and asking for the secret of her wonderful performances, we see that the source of her power was that she could inspire others, by her words and her spirit, with a confidence in her mission, and that she could do this because her own faith was so strong. Her faith was strong because it had grown up by silent meditation and prayer, in a mind, pure, single, devout. Eminently and remarkably does she belong to that heroic band "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, out of weakness were made strong, waxed mighty in war, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." Literally she fulfilled almost every clause of this description, and all by the strength and depth of her own conviction.

Thus far all is plain. But we must also ask, was this faith purely subjective? Had it no outward object? In other words, were her visions realities, or were they the creations of her own mind? On the one hand we feel a reluctance to admit the reality of such appearances, which "live no longer in the faith of reason." They seem, too, both in themselves and in what they tell her to do, to have been created naturally by the thoughts and the belief already in her mind.

On the other hand, it is difficult to explain a power which produced such immense results as coming from mere imagination. Could so strong a faith rest on a delusion? Could she continue for so many years firm

in the belief that she had daily intercourse with these angels, if there was no foundation for it whatever?

The question must for the present remain a problem,—perhaps forever. The Squire of La Pucelle, Daulon, having asked to see the angels and saints who appeared to her, she told him that he was "not good enough to see them." Neither are we good enough. These visions are unintelligible to us and constitute a secret between this girl and her God.

Within a few years many attempts have been made by leading French ecclesiastics to procure the canonization of the Maid of Orleans by the Pope. Pio Nono, it is thought, was not averse to this. Bishop Dupanloup exerted himself strongly in the same direction. Let us hope, however, it will not be done. Nothing can make her more saintly than she is already. To surround her with a cloud of panegyric and legendary miracles will only veil from our eyes the simple beauty and grandeur of her character. Considering also that it was a Church court which sent her to the stake, it would remind us too much of the saying of Jesus concerning those who build the tombs of the prophets and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, only bearing witness thereby to the fact that they are the children of those who slew the prophets.—*Events and Epochs in Religious History.*

A LION.

We think it would be an excellent thing if all children were as sensitive to praise and blame as the dog in the following story. And, if Lion felt so much mortification over coming into the parlor with muddy feet, cannot our boys be a little more careful than he was even?

A Newfoundland dog, owned by a New Orleans lady, gave an entertaining illustration of the fact that in some way dogs comprehend what is said to them.

One day a lady called on his mistress, and during her visit Lion came in rather shyly, lay down on the parlor carpet, and went to sleep. The conversation on, and the visitor finally said,—

"What a handsome Newfoundland dog you have!"

Lion opened one eye.

"Yes," said the mistress. "*He is a very good dog, and takes excellent care of the children.*" Lion opened the other eye, and waved his tail complacently to and fro on the carpet. "*When the baby goes out, he*

always goes with her, and I feel sure that no harm can come to her," his mistress continued. Lion's tail thumped up and down violently on the carpet. "*And he is so gentle to them all, and such a playmate and companion to them, that we would not take \$1,000 for him.*" Lion's tail now went up and down, to and fro, and round and round, with great, undisguised glee. "But," said the mistress, "*Lion has one serious fault.*" Total subsidence of Lion's tail, together with the appearance of an expression of great concern on his face. "*He will come in here with his dirty feet and lie down on the carpet when I have told him time and again that he mustn't do it.*"

At this point Lion would doubtless have remonstrated if he could; but, being speechless, he arose with an air of the utmost dejection and humiliation and slunk out of the room, with his lately exuberant tail totally crestfallen.

The law of Nature is, Do the thing, and you shall have the power; but they who do not the thing have not the power.—*Emerson.*

Lovers of the native birds will take courage from the statement of Chairman Field of the Massachusetts Fish and Game Commission. He declares that there is a very close connection between the superabundance of tent caterpillars this season and the extermination of birds in the past. "Ten years ago," he says, "there was an excessive demand for millinery purposes for the cuckoo and the rose-breasted grosbeak, both native birds. These are the worst foes which the tent caterpillar has to face. But these two birds are now practically exterminated, and the tent caterpillar is having the time of his life on our trees all over New England."

—*Boston Journal.*

Every day brings a ship,
Every ship brings a word;
Well for those who have no fear,
Looking seaward, well assured
That the word the vessel brings
Is the word they wish to hear.

—*Emerson.*

This year let us each endeavor to grow; to grow according to the law of our own being; to be ourselves and no one else, to be our best selves, and so to find out our own strength and weakness. To be true to ourselves; to be faithful to the light God gives us; not to be moulded by fashion, but to stand on one's own feet, this gives every one some strength, some power to do good.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 45 Spring Lane, Canton, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

DICKENS CHARACTERS.

In what books by Charles Dickens do the following characters appear?

1. Mr. Garland.
2. Miss Emma Haredale.
3. Mr. Kenwigs.
4. Mrs. Jarley.
5. Wilkins Micawber.
6. Miss Larkins.

II.

EVERGREEN.

1. Green and real estate form a Northern country.
2. A city and green form something dangerous.
3. Green and a child's game, with skirts, form a bait.
4. Green and an elevation form a term applied to Vermont State.
5. One of the Presidents and green form the cloth worn by woodmen in Merrie England of olden time.
6. Green and part of the body form legal tender.
7. Green and a part of a deer form a new arrival.
8. Green and a dwelling form the abode of beauty.
9. A sport with green gives the scene of the sport in question.
10. An unchangeable green.

—Selected.

III.

CHANGED INITIALS.

I am a word of four letters, and am a synonym for fearless.

Change my head, and I am deprived of heat.

Again, and I am to double.

Again, and I am a metal.

Again, and I am a synonym for grasp.

IV.

A PICNIC LUNCH.

1. Go beg slid.
2. Wash snidec.
3. Sad resin.
4. Elkspic.
5. Silveo.
6. Pack no gees.
7. Pale pipe.
8. Cydam.
9. Sain sir.
10. Heat cool thoc.
11. Meal done.
12. Mace rice.

—*The Myrtle in The Beacon.*

V.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

In hut, but not in cabin.
 In art, but not in tent.
 In pie, but not in milk.
 In pudding, but not in ice.
 In yard, but not in garden.
 In near, but not in far.
 In east, but not in south.
 In west, but not in north.
 In yacht, but not in vessel.
 In ear, but not in hair.
 In are, but not in been.
 In rear, but not in back.
 My *whole* is a form of greeting.

Answers to puzzles in the December Number.

I. NUMERICAL PUZZLE.—1. Charles Sumner. 2. Thomas B. Reed. 3. William B. Frye. 4. Thomas R. Marshall. 5. Charles Evans Houghes.

II. SOBRIQUETS.—I. William Pitt, Earl of Chatham. 2. Nicholas Catinat, a Marshal of France. 3. Queen Elizabeth. 4. Izaak Walton. 5. Simon Bolivar.

III. CHRISTMAS PI.—Books, magazines, music, rifle, camera, skates, flexible flyer, graphophone, candy, games, doll, drum, horn, calendars, furs, piano, automobile, ties, handkerchiefs, holly.

IV. CHARACTERISTIC INITIALS.—1. Daniel Webster. 2. Thomas A. Edison. 3. Louis Agassiz. 4. William H. Prescott. 5. Samuel F. B. Morse.

V. HEROES AND HEROINES.—1. Ivanhoe. 2. Dombey and Son. 3. Old Mortality. 4. Great Expectations. 5. Rob Roy. 6. The Newcomes.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins, or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents. No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

HEREAFTER, ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS, INTENDED FOR THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, "THE CHAIRMAN, MRS. GEORGE G. SAVILLE, 25 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MASS." THIS INCLUDES SUBSCRIPTIONS, CHANGES OF ADDRESS, REQUESTS FOR DISCONTINUANCE, BEGGING LETTERS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OR BRANCHES.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The regular monthly meeting of the *Cheerful Letter Exchange* will be held Friday, January 2, at 10.30 A.M. at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. All interested are cordially invited to be present.

LIBRARY NOTICE.

The *Cheerful Letter Exchange* offers to start a circulating library in any small community needing one, providing proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references supplied.

Apply to Mrs. Walter G. Leith, 6 Ashton Place, Cambridge, Mass. 48 Irving St.

The Home Study Work of the *Cheerful Letter Exchange* offers to help those who wish to improve their education. Lessons will be given in all subjects which can be taught by correspondence, such as Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Algebra, all branches of English, History, Botany, Geography, Languages, Drawing, etc.

Requests for these lessons should be sent to Mrs. Annie F. Hudson, 5 Alveston Street, Jamaica Plain, Mass.

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the *Cheerful Letter Exchange* that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

The Chairman, Mrs. George G. Saville, is at the rooms, 25 Beacon Street, on Wednesday afternoons, from 2 until 4.30 P.M.

In sending subscriptions for the *Cheerful Letter*, address The *Cheerful Letter Exchange*, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Subscriptions, 50 cents a year.

Chairman of *Cheerful Letter Exchange*, Mrs. George G. Saville, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Editor of "The *Cheerful Letter*," Miss L. Freeman Clarke.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 80 Goffe Street, Quincy, Mass.